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SIPDIS

FOR ISN/NESS FOR DAN FENSTERMACHER
DOE FOR DOE/NNSA/NA-212 FOR PARRISH STAPLES
DOE ALSO FOR DOE/NNSA/NA-211 FOR RAYMOND GREENBERG JR.

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KNNP](#) [TRGY](#) [ENRG](#) [PARM](#) [AR](#)
SUBJECT: CONVERSION OF ARGENTINA'S RA-6 RESEARCH REACTOR TO
TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO END OF SEPTEMBER

REF: STATE 83447

¶1. On September 8, ESTCouns met with Lic. Norma Boero, President of Argentina's National Energy Commission (CNEA by its Spanish acronym) to follow up on reftel demarche. EST Couns delivered another copy of DOE Assistant Deputy Administrator Bieniawski's letter and discussed the invitation to the IAEA October meeting in Washington, as well as the conversion of Argentina's RA-6 reactor. Boero could not yet confirm whether she would be able to attend the Washington meeting, but pledged she would do her utmost to re-arrange her travel schedule in order to do so. ESTCouns will continue to press Boero for a decision as soon as possible on her attendance. As for the RA-6 conversion, Boero was pleased to announce that the CNEA planned to meet this milestone on September 19 and delivered a letter to this effect, addressed to DOE's Bieniawski. Text of letter follows.

¶2. BEGIN TEXT OF LETTER

Comission Nacional de Energia Atomica
Buenos Aires, 8 de septiembre de 2008

Dr. Andrew bieniawski
Assistant Deputy Administrator For Global Threat Reduction
DOE

The Argentine Republic has established four milestones within the frame of the Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR) international programme, created by the United States Department of Energy (US DOE), and according to the terms of the following Contracts: Contract No DE-SC55-05NA25735 and No DE-GI55-05NA25738, both signed by the National Commission of Atomic Energy (CNEA, by its Spanish acronym) and the US DOE, by means of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). Said milestones are as follows:

- ¶1. Export campaign of High Enriched Uranium Fuel Plates formally fabricated for RA-2 Argentine reactor.
- ¶2. Export campaign of High Enriched Spent Fuel Elements (HEU FE) from RA-6 Argentine reactor to the United States of America.
- ¶3. Manufacture of new Low Enriched Fuel Elements (LEU FE) in Argentina which shall be received in RA-6 reactor.
- ¶4. Placing of the first LEU FE in the core of RA-6 reactor with the aim of fulfilling the last stage of the Facility Conversion to Low Enrichment Fuel Element Operating Facilities.

Whereas the first stage was successfully achieved in July 2006, the second one was achieved by the end of 2007, concluding with the storage of the above stated FE in the USA. Subsequently, the fabrication of new LEU core was

finished at the end of 2007, precisely in September of said year.

Finally, at present, the CNEA is working hard in order to meet the last milestone, in other words, to begin with the core filling, which according to the internal schedule is to take place on September 19, 2008. This task will complete the main objective of CNEA, that is, to transform all its facilities into facilities operating by means of Low Enriched Uranium. Nevertheless, it is considered that RA-6 reactor will achieve criticality in November 2008. This will demonstrate that CNEA has adhered to the acceptance programme of SNFFRR (Spent Nuclear Fuel of Foreign Research Reactor) and specially to the Reduced Environment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR) programme.

Lic. Norma L. Boero
Presidenta

END TEXT LETTER

WAYNE